

June 10, 1997

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SUBJECT: **Deputy Secretary's Focus Report**

The following is a brief summary of Department of Transportation events and items of interest from the past month:

OPERATIONAL ITEMS:

SW REGION ENGINEERS GO BACK TO SCHOOL

SW Region was approached by a math teacher from Discovery Middle School requesting WSDOT to have some of its engineers demonstrate how math is used in their work. Staff worked with the teacher to set up a curriculum that included a one hour tour of four areas (Design, Survey, CAD, and Materials) in the SW Region Office Compound, plus a short math test to give to the students. The math test had sample formulas for calculating highway design quantities. Everyone involved was very helpful and took the time to prepare excellent demonstrations. The students were quite pleased with what they saw and learned which was evident in the thank you letters sent after the visit.

THIRTY-FOUR PROJECTS FUNDED WITH OIL REBATE MONEY

TransAid announced the funding of thirty four (34) projects and programs totaling \$4,861,000 that will be funded under the Oil Rebate Competitive Program.

- The Oil Rebate Program has four eligible categories: Energy Conservation, Reduction of Single Occupant Vehicles, Improved Traffic Flow, and Improved Public Safety. Each of these categories received one quarter of the available funding, or \$1,215,250. Successful applicants will have three years from the time they sign the funding agreement

to complete their projects or programs. This is the fourth and final program to be implemented using the latest oil rebate settlement.

TRANSAID INITIATES A VIDEO LOGGING VERSION OF THEIR OWN

TransAid has hired Hans Cregg, formerly of the Transportation Data Office, to develop a local agency version of SR View and to assist local agencies with implementation. SR View is a computer-based “video logging” technique.

Hans has already contacted the city of Olympia and Anacortes, Thurston County, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), and the Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC). TIB and WTSC see many benefits of SR View for their programs, and local agency interest in SR View has been phenomenal. In every instance, SR View was extremely well received and captured people's imagination beyond the basic functions of road logging and features inventory. For example, Olympia wants to explore the possibility of using it as a project management tool for road construction and the local FHWA office is interested in using SR View as an in-house tool for their damage assessment inspectors.

This local SR View was put to the acid test in Anacortes. Hans Cregg and TDO's video logging section filmed all primary and secondary roads in Anacortes. These images are currently being processed for final compact disc (CD) storage that will provide the Anacortes public works department a visual record of their street system.

Hans has been asked to come back by all the local agencies mentioned above and give follow-up presentations to a larger audience with more diverse interests. He has also been invited to several engineering-related conferences to give his SR View presentation.

SEVEN YEAR EFFORT BRINGS AGREEMENT

WSDOT's Executive Management and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC), have agreed to maintenance, operation, and construction guidelines for implementing selected sections of RCW 47.24, City Streets that are Parts of State Highways; the figures of WAC 468-18-050, and the City Responsibilities for Maintaining Intersections/Interchanges.

This effort began in 1990 with a WSDOT-AWC Task Force addressing more detailed guidelines for sections of the RCW. The effort was then extended through another WSDOT-AWC Task Force that addressed the 15,000 population threshold for certain WSDOT-versus-city responsibilities. (That threshold was later increased to 22,500 by the legislature.)

Negotiated final development of the guidelines were agreed upon and will be incorporated into WSDOT manuals and related guidance for maintenance, operations, and construction activities. AWC will distribute copies to their members for action.

SR 290/TRENT AVENUE REALIGNMENT MOVING FORWARD

The partnership effort to realign SR 290 in Spokane continues. WSDOT is working with the City of Spokane, the State Of Washington Higher Education Council, and the Washington Water Power Company on this project. The concept calls for SR 290 to follow the Spokane River from downtown Spokane for about _ mile rather than crossing two bridges before rejoining its current alignment. One of those bridges is slated for replacement in the next biennium. If the next route is feasible, the new bridge would not be required. A consultant is now on board to look at environmental concerns along the proposed route.

WEEKEND STORM CREATES HAVOC FOR EASTERN REGION

An intense storm front moved through the Eastern Region on Saturday May 31 causing problems on the highways in the Eastern Region. Eleven different highways were affected by the storm's wrath. Crews were still mopping up problem areas on Sunday and Monday, June 1 & 2. Some more intense situations occurring on state highways were:

SR 2-A power failure near Fairchild Air Force Base in west Spokane County also disrupted electricity to a pump system at a railroad underpass causing water to accumulate on the highway. Crews obtained a gas-powered pump to clear the road and keep it open to traffic.

SR 20-A slide about 1 _ miles west of the Sherman Pass summit brought boulders as large as 6 feet by 8 feet onto the highway covering one lane and half of the other for about 5 hours. Crews were able to keep traffic flowing to some extent while they moved the rocks to the side. Blasting will be needed to reduce the boulders to a manageable size for removal.

PESHASTIN CREEK CONTINUES TO EXPERIENCE EROSION

North Central Region personnel continue to work with property owners along Peshastin Creek on Blewett Pass Highway, SR97, as well as the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, in an attempt to solve the erosion problems along the creek. The erosion has been occurring for many years. Rechanneling the creek in 1958 brought about flooding onto the property and highway causing extensive damage in subsequent years. Riprap has been placed along the creek on the highway side, controlling the erosion to the highway. Erosion to the property across the creek continues to occur. A settlement offer compensating for property damage and erosion control measures has been rejected by the affected property owners. Future meetings are being scheduled with the property owners.

SUNNYSLOPE INTERCHANGE GETS ITS RIBBON CUTTING

The Sunnyslope Interchange ribbon cutting on SR 2 and SR 97 near Wenatchee in North Central Region was held on May 2. This marked the "official" opening for this \$4.7M project. This new interchange serves the growing Sunnyslope area north of the Wenatchee River and west of the Columbia River. This current project, Sunnyslope Interchange Stage 2, was actually completed late last fall, but because of the early onset of winter the ribbon cutting was delayed until spring. An earlier contract, constructed in 1991 and 1992, addressed drainage and adjacent streets as part of the total project.

FREIGHT MOBILITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

The Transportation Economic Partnerships (TEP) staff are contributing to a department wide effort to implement the recommendations of the Legislature's Freight Mobility

Advisory Committee. TEP personnel are lead in developing the scope of work for the consultant and department technical analyses. The scope of work is being developed in consultation with the following: Highways and Local Roads, Public Transportation and Rail, Aviation, Planning and Programming, Finance and Administration as well as the Office of Urban Mobility and the Eastern Region. TransAid is coordinating the overall effort consistent with the budget proviso in the 1997-1999 Transportation Budget.

FHWA STAFF VISIT WITH WSDOT

With the assistance of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Office, WSDOT was able to meet with and discuss issues related to innovative financing. Several divisions participated in the discussions in Olympia which included discussions on the President's proposals in NEXTEA and other pending reauthorization bills and a visit to the SR 16 Tacoma project office and tour of the Tacoma Narrows bridge.

AVIATION SENDS PILOTS TO WSDOT EARTHQUAKE DRILL

The Aviation Division coordinated air support for the earthquake exercise "Soundshake 97". The Division's Search and Rescue Coordinator enlisted the services of nine volunteer pilots who flew sixteen missions, most of which involved transporting WSDOT engineers and bridge inspectors.

Aviation Planning staff met with the Puget Sound Regional Council staff to begin coordination efforts for the state and regional system planning process. The activity brings yet another element into the aviation planning process that was started when SB 6422 (the encroachment legislation) required coordinated planning between local jurisdictions and the WSDOT Aviation Division.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT BOARD SELECTS FY 98 PROJECTS

The Transportation Improvement Board approved its FY 98 list of projects at the May Board meeting. The following is a summary:

- Transportation Improvement Account (TIA)
24 Projects, Total of \$33,101,400
- Urban Arterial Trust Account (UTA)
29 Projects, Total of \$47,836,000
- City Hardship Assistance Program (CHAA)
1 Project, Total of \$425,000
- Pedestrian Facilities Program (PFP)
56 Projects, Total of \$4,489,400
- Public Transportation Systems Account (PTSA)
6 Projects, Total of \$1,957,336
- Central Puget Sound Public Transportation Account (CPSPTA)
10 Projects, Total of \$6,515,100

HERITAGE CORRIDOR STAFF INVOLVED IN SR 12 OUTREACH EFFORTS

Heritage Corridor staff participated in the May 20, 1997 meeting of the SR 12 Heritage Corridor Plan Steering Committee. The meeting, which included a representation of local governments, Heritage Organizations, and interested property owners, reviewed viewer employed photography results, listened to and made suggestions related to the existing condition report prepared by the consultant, and began discussions which will lead towards the development of a vision statement and goals for the corridor.

The WSDOT/ADSC (Association of Drilled Shaft Contractors) Task Force has developed a Special Provision to govern the construction of shaft foundations. Ron Chassie, Region 10 of FHWA, proposed that this Special Provision be distributed nationwide. This Special Provision was cooperatively written by WSDOT and the drilling contractors.

CONTRACT AD & AWARDS

April 1997 bids were opened on 18 preservation projects and one facilities project for a total of 19 new contracts. The total engineer's estimate was \$49,002,614.50, with total bids of \$50,403,060.51, or 2.86 percent above the estimate. There were 252 uncompleted contracts with a total work-in-progress dollar value of \$1,138,014,180.71.

WASHINGTON STATE FIRST FOR PILOT CONSOLIDATION PROCESS

The Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), in cooperation with WSDOT, agreed to become a pilot state for the consolidation of MPO federal planning grants (FTA/FHWA). The pilot process will test the expectation that combining all federal planning grants under a new process will benefit both the MPOs and the federal grant agencies (FHWA and FTA). Washington State's pilot application recently received FHWA/FTA approval. Although Washington is the second state to apply and receive approval (North Dakota was first), it will be the first state to actually implement a pilot process, which will begin July 1, 1997.

WSDOT MAY FORM PARTNERSHIP FOR LARGE PHOTO PROJECT

WSDOT Geographic Services Aerial Photography Section held three initial meetings in mid-May with local government representatives from eight counties in the South Central Region to discuss possible partnering with WSDOT on a large photo project. The positive potential for leveraging technical and fiscal resources has been well received thus far.

INTERCITY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NETWORK PROJECT CONTINUES

The Intercity Public Transportation Network Project defines intercity passenger service corridors of state significance and identifies facilities that enhance linkage between intercity service and local transportation modes. The project advisory committee, comprised of members representing private intercity bus carriers, stakeholder organizations (e.g. Washington Association of Rail Passengers), modal advocates, metropolitan planning organizations, WSDOT regions, Regional Transit Authority, and transit agencies providing intercity service will assist in defining network criteria and standards.

The project is consistent with Washington's Transportation Plan and the Public Transportation and Intercity Rail Passenger Plan. It implements three plan action strategies under the objective "integrate public transportation services into a coordinated system linked by intermodal facilities."

The project work plan includes: inventorying current services and facilities, developing criteria and standards to define significance, mapping the intercity network, and identifying current gaps. Twenty-year population growth will also be measured and analyzed to identify any future network deficiencies.

The project advisory committee is currently in the process of defining the communities or places on the network and the links or facilities that connect them. The places are being determined by population size and attributes (county seat, site of major medical and/or educational center, etc.).

CHENEY TO COULEE CITY RAIL LINE GETS A MAKE-OVER

Rail Office staff traveled to Davenport and met with the six grain co-ops that ship grain on the 108-mile Cheney to Coulee City rail line and the short line operator of the line. A commitment was secured from the shippers to contribute an additional \$200,000 to the \$610,170 WSDOT loan to rehabilitate the line. This line was out of service for two weeks in April due to poor track conditions. The line needs extensive rehabilitation to maintain its FRA Class 2 track standards. Consequently, an agreement in principle was reached where the shippers contribute \$200,000 towards the rehab and the short line will then pay the shippers a \$10 per carload rebate until the money the shippers contribute to the rehab is reimbursed. This is an incentive for the shippers to use the rail line if they want to recover their investment. The short line railroad has agreed to a 15-year loan for the \$610,170 received from the WSDOT Essential Rail Assistance Account. With a total of \$810,170 available for the rehab, the short line operator believes that all the defective ties at the rail joints can be replaced; replacing the defective joint ties is the most pressing need on the line. Approximately 16,000 ties will be installed on the line this summer.

An agreement is being drafted between WSDOT, Coulee City Line Shippers and the Palouse and Coulee City Railroad for the rehabilitation work. It was determined that by keeping the 5,000 carloads per year the line generates moving via rail, approximately 14,000 heavily loaded trucks are kept off Washington highways. This avoids \$3.6 million per in highway maintenance costs.

ABERDEEN-HOQUIAM PREFERRED ROUTE SELECTED

The Aberdeen-Hoquiam Corridor Project Steering Committee (consisting of local agency, business and other state agencies) has selected a preferred alternative and is waiting for concurrence from permitting agencies. Selected to improve traffic flow and safety was a new four-lane limited-access route that includes using existing streets, new alignment and includes new bridges over the Hoquiam and Wishkah rivers. The goal of the project is to provide the necessary infrastructure to support industrial, commercial and tourist activities in western Grays Harbor County.

REPAVING PROJECT BEGINS ON STATE ROUTE 20 IN ANACORTES

Work has begun on a project to repave five miles of the State Route 20 Spur in Anacortes. The job lies between 36th Street at Commercial Avenue and the ferry terminal.

The work includes repairing concrete panels, resurfacing with asphalt concrete, signal loop replacement, adjustment of drainage structures and utilities, pavement marking and signing. The highway will remain open to traffic during construction, but motorists are advised to exercise extra caution when traveling through the work area and be alert for lane closures and temporary traffic revisions. All work should be finished sometime this summer.

PRESENTATION GIVEN TO PROJECT DEVELOPMENT ENGINEERS

WSDOT's Risk Manager, Bill Henselman, addressed WSDOT Project Development Engineers at their annual meeting in Wenatchee on the subject of tort results and how it's impacting design and construction. The following was covered during the presentation: Statistical information on tort lawsuit filings and tort payouts over the past five fiscal years; a sample of outstanding tort claims filed against DOT; a copy of the calendar year 1996 report by the Attorney General to the Legislative Transportation Committee on torts resolved during the year; a summary report on 1995-1997 large design related lawsuits; discussion on the grouping of the 1995-1997 large lawsuits into five issue areas; conclusions on loss control into three issues after reviewing these large lawsuits; discussion on two design related Washington State Supreme Court decisions; and a brief question and answer period.

NEW PARK & RIDE LOT EASES ANACORTES TERMINAL OVERFLOW

Through a joint effort on the part of the City of Anacortes, Skagit Transit, Texaco Oil Refinery, and WSF North Region Terminal Manager, a new off-site park & ride lot was opened on SR 20 enroute to the Anacortes Terminal. The new lot has already taken pressure off the parking situation at the terminal.

FERRIES SOON TO BECOME PART OF THE 4-DIGIT DIAL SYSTEM

Work is currently underway to connect all Washington State Ferry terminal phone lines through the Pier 52/Colman Dock PBX switch. Upon completion, all affected lines will have 4-digit dial capability to all interconnected WSDOT phone lines, and the capability to "lock" malicious calls for tracking purposes by law enforcement officers.

TERMINAL PROJECTS BEGIN AGREEMENT REVIEW PROCESS

Washington State Ferries has started into the agreement review process for the Bremerton auto and passenger-only terminal project with the Sinclair Landing Association. Negotiations with the Port of Bremerton have also been scheduled. These efforts are complex and unprecedented for WSF but the over-all feeling is the passenger-only component and the basic auto terminal can go forward during the coming fiscal year.

QUALITY ITEMS:

REGIONAL ROUNDTABLES ENHANCE COMMUNICATION

The Eastern Region held its annual series of Regional Roundtables for the Maintenance and Operations Division during May. Meetings were held in all four Maintenance Areas and the Spokane Heavy Equipment Shop. The Roundtables provide a forum for employees and management to discuss issues on a one-on-one basis. Engineering Roundtables will be held in the Fall.

OEO STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE THROUGH QUALITY EFFORTS

WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity continues to make quality efforts in the following areas:

Both the Affirmative Action Task Force and the Affirmative Action Technical Subcommittee are working toward developing long term solutions to issues raised by the Governor's Affirmative Action Policy Committee (GAAPCom).

The Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) staff is updating information on the Recruitment Resource Guide to include a guide to recruiting, new information on how to avoid asking discriminating questions during an interview, and other information that will be helpful to managers.

The Diversity Advisory Team is moving ahead towards developing a proposal for a planned Diversity Forum later this year. The group also decided to work toward the development of a Diversity Recognition Award that could be presented to deserving WSDOT individuals who meet the criteria.

QUALITY CONFERENCE ENCOURAGES TEAMWORK

North Central Region Administrator, Don Senn, attended the Association for Quality and Participation Annual Spring Conference in Baltimore May 11 through 15. The theme, "The Spirit of Working Together," offered many workshops and sessions on teamwork, employee involvement, and providing a working environment that creates a high level of productivity. By creating a positive environment through quality concepts, employees can make personal contributions and impact business success.

QUALITY PROCEDURES BECOMING SECOND NATURE

WSDOT's Transportation Economic Partnerships (TEP) held its annual retreat to develop a work plan for 1997-1998 in May. Using quality procedures, the staff was able to develop the plan much easier than in 1996. In the time scheduled for the retreat, and two short meetings prior to the retreat, the staff was able to review the results of the employee survey, develop appropriate work elements for addressing the findings of the survey, and address the department's stretch goals and develop a 1997-1998 work plan.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS LEAD TO QUALITY RESULTS

The Association of General Contractors and the WSDOT Joint Quality Structure Team continues to provide the opportunity for an open cooperative improvement effort between WSDOT and construction industry representatives. During the meeting held on May 22, a joint gathering of the chartered quality team for the continuous improvement of bridge consultant plans provided an excellent forum for communication between the Quality Team and the AGC Representatives.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING HOLDS INFORMATIVE CLASS

WSDOT's Planning & Programming Service Center (P&PSC) sponsored an "Overview of Planning and Programming" class at the South Central Region. The class is designed to

inform WSDOT staff of the WSDOT planning and programming process. The course also clarifies how other WSDOT service centers fit within the planning and programming process, and affords service center personnel the opportunity to hear directly from their customers.

ON-SITE Q-EXCHANGES WITH STAFF HELP WITH IMPROVEMENTS

In an effort to promote communication between P&PSC staff and the P&PSC Quality Steering Committee, the Q-Steering Committee is pursuing some new communication opportunities. To get the ball rolling, Steering Committee members have been visiting job sites to talk personally with P&PSC staff about the Q2000 Initiative and its relation to their work. In these Q-exchanges, Steering Committee members are sharing why they embrace this effort as something positive for the department and P&PSC - and what they hope will be achieved. In turn, staff are sharing their thoughts about Q2000 and their experiences so far, both successes - as well as obstacles. Two of these site visits have occurred so far, with seven more scheduled by the end of June.

EMPLOYEE SURVEY RESULTS REVIEWED

The entire Audit Office met and reviewed the results of the employee survey and gave the highlights of the survey class attended by Audit staff. After the presentation of the results there were questions and discussion on the general concepts of the survey and the next steps in the improvement process. A meeting has been planned for the end of June for all members of the staff to discuss opportunities for improvement and determine which areas the Audit Office will concentrate on improving.

AUDIT OFFICE ACTIVE IN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GROUPS

Audit staff continue to participate in Quality Improvement Process groups involving Materials Business Plan, Time Sheet Process, and Emergency Contract processes. The Audit Office has been asked to participate in two other process improvement teams if the applications for the teams are accepted. The two areas involve work order modifications for TransAid and Voucher copy duplication.

ONE-STOP PRINTING SERVICES WILL SAVE CUSTOMERS TIME

An informal study team formed from Printing Services and Forms Management staff are looking for improvement opportunities in the process used to obtain “non-form related” printing.

Currently, customers could potentially have to go to two locations to obtain printing and/or copy work. If Printing Services can not meet the customers’ requirements, they are referred to Forms Management to fill out paperwork and send the job to the Department of Printing’s copy centers.

Currently, methods are being looked at that will improve customer service by providing one location for all “non-form” related printing. The customer will benefit by having only one location for all their copying needs. Printing Services can offer the customer the

experience and expertise to guarantee that the printing will be done using the most expedient and economical equipment and resources available.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION EVENTS HELD

On May 29, the Northwest Region held its employee recognition ceremony and barbecue. Due to the number of people involved, and to reduce the amount of travel required, identical programs were held at the regional office in Shoreline, at the Corson Avenue facility in South Seattle, and at Mount Vernon.

A total of 105 service awards were presented, and seven individuals or groups were recognized for their extraordinary contributions to WSDOT programs, to their work groups, or to their fellow employees.

Transportation Commissioner Connie Niva and Acting Deputy Secretary Skip Burch participated in the program at the Regional Headquarters, which demonstrated their commitment to the recognition of quality efforts.

ELECTRONIC FILING THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE

The Electronic Filing Task Force Committee is looking at various electronic solutions to decrease the mass amount of hardcopy reports and data that the Accounting Services Office must file and distribute. Three separate products have been tested to evaluate the viability of this technology. The product testing period ends in May and a report of the results will be developed. Lessons learned will be factored into future Requests for Proposal. The first electronic filing transmission from Clark County was received on May 29. The transaction worked perfectly due to the two week collaboration of all parties to develop and test procedures before the actual event. The notification process by electronic mail was especially effective.

PURCHASING QUALITY INITIATIVE CONTINUES

WSDOT's Purchasing Office continued process improvement efforts with staff visiting with the Raymond Maintenance Area Office to discuss purchasing and inventory issues. A demonstration was held on how to access purchasing information on the Internet including the Purchasing Manual, Property Disposal Manual and State Purchasing Contracts. Since the Raymond office is remote in location, this source for information will be very helpful.

GOOD NEWS ITEMS:

JOHNSON RIDGE OBSERVATORY OPEN TO VISITORS

On May 17, 1997, the US Forest Service held the opening ceremony for the Johnston Ridge Observatory (JRO) at the end of SR-504/Spirit Lake Memorial Highway. Congresswoman Linda Smith, former Congresswoman Jolene Unsoeld, Representatives from Governor Locke's office, Senator Gorton's office, Senator Murray's office, USFS folks and local elected officials all spoke. WSDOT was represented by Southwest Region Administrator Gerry Smith who received a beautiful plaque for the WSDOT efforts.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, a photo-op/ribbon cutting for the newest section of SR 504 was held at the entrance to the parking lot. Commissioner Ed Barnes wielded the scissors and was assisted by Van Youngquist, Cowlitz County Commissioner, Ted Stubblefield, Forest Supervisor, Gene Fong, FHWA, and Gerry Smith, WSDOT.

WSDOT REPRESENTED AT NATIONAL GATHERING IN D.C.

Kathleen Davis, TransAid's Federal Funds Manager, attended the meeting of a nationwide committee which is working on rewriting the Fiscal Management Information System (FMIS). WSDOT is especially interested in significantly streamlining the system and developing a system that is user friendly. The Committee's purpose is to provide input for revising the FMIS and provide suggestions on data element requirements. The committee consists of 8 participants representing 8 different states, 4 representing FHWA, and 4 representing DOT's throughout the country. Plans call for the new system to be operational by the year 2000.

CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE BRINGS TOGETHER 200 PARTICIPANTS

The 1997 Region 10 FHWA Civil Rights Conference hosted by WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity from April 29 - May 1st, was a huge success. The conference was attended by over 200 participants. Tim Wise, Director of the Youth Anti-Prejudice Project and Progressive Policy Associates, and Ron Sims, King County Executive, were among the speakers at the conference. Mr. Wise, a well-known spokesperson on issues of racism, launched the conference with a strong and effective presentation on the past, present and future of affirmative action.

The three-day event also included a wide variety of workshops on internal and external civil rights programs, including Bonding & Access to Capital, Indian Preference & Tribal Employment Rights, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), women and minority representation in construction and other professions, and other related workshops. The closing event was an open forum which offered participants an opportunity to ask questions about the role of FHWA.

UNSPENT GRANT FUNDING TRANSFERRED TO ELIGIBLE PROJECT

WSDOT and FHWA personnel met on May 12, 1997 to discuss a request by Clallam County to transfer unspent funds from a completed project to an uncompleted project which had experienced unanticipated mitigation costs. FHWA agreed to transfer approximately \$52,000 from a grant provided to Clallam County to remove billboards to a grant to study, select and purchase right of way for the Olympic Discovery bicycle and pedestrian path. The county has already purchased billboards for removal from all willing sellers. In order to ensure that the Olympic Discovery Trail location was acceptable to adjacent property owners, the county ran into unanticipated mitigation costs including some fencing and relocation of a portion of the trail to utilize only willing sellers.

WSDOT'S OIL SMART TEAM WINS STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP AWARD

The statewide Oil Smart Steering Committee has announced the WSDOT team as the winner of the first annual HERO award. This is a leadership award given to individuals, teams, or organizations who have demonstrated extraordinary contributions to the Oil Smart mission during past campaigns. The final recipients were selected from a competitive group of outstanding nominees.

The individuals of the WSDOT team were chosen because they demonstrated exceptional leadership, outstanding involvement, and personal commitment to the Oil Smart campaigns. They often were founding members of county efforts and all dedicated countless hours to assist in initiating and organizing county or regional campaigns. In addition, they demonstrated commitment and WSDOT leadership by implementing successful work site campaigns. Together they have won a total of 37 different county Oil Smart awards for WSDOT work sites throughout the state during the last four years.

The honorees are: Jana Augenstine, Daniela Bremmer-Washington, Bob Caldwell, Faye Jenkins-Edwards, T. J. Nedrow, John Shadoff, and Jeff Sommerville. They will be formally recognized during the Awards Banquet at the 21st Public Transportation and Rail Conference in Spokane on August 26.

US 101 OPEN HOUSE MEETING BRINGS POSITIVE RESULTS

An open house meeting held to discuss possible safety improvements at the US 101 intersection with Lynch Road, near Shelton, resulted in a large audience turnout and strong public support for the proposed changes. The at-grade intersection has been a cause for community concern and interim measures were needed to improve safety at the intersection. Improvements that are being added immediately include increased signing, adding of rumble buttons, restriping the west half of the intersection (Kamilchee Lane) for right-in, right-out turning movements only, and commitment by Washington State Patrol for greater speed limit enforcement. Olympic Region will also work toward identifying a funding source to build future acceleration and deceleration lanes.

NORTHWEST REGION EMPLOYEE WINS TOP BRAINSTORM AWARD

On May 6, Michael Person, an Electronics Technician 3 with Area 5 Maintenance, was honored at the annual Productivity Board "Employee Recognition Event" at the Capitol in Olympia. He received a Top Five Highest Savings/Revenue-generating Brainstorm Award.

Person's suggestion involved replacing fire-detector heads in the Mount Baker Ridge tunnel and First Hill lid on Interstate 90 with a less expensive model. When original-equipment detector heads were replaced, heads costing \$625 each were installed. As a result of Person's suggestion, an alternative brand detector head was identified, tested and found to perform satisfactorily. Each alternative head cost \$27. During the first year of suggestion implementation, 498 heads were purchased and installed for a savings of \$297,804.

As a result of Person's suggestion, WSDOT was recognized for having the highest savings for a large agency--\$316,028.

Governor Gary Locke recognized the award recipients at the Olympia event. Secretary of Transportation Sid Morrison, in his congratulations to Person, said, "Your proactive involvement in addressing problems associated with fire detector heads in the I-90 tunnels has produced outstanding results. In addition to savings realized as a result of your initiative, we have been able to minimize disruptions to the traveling public." Person previously had received a \$10,000 cash award for his suggestion.

MORE FORMS AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY

Forms Management distributed several new electronic forms to Exchange and the replicating servers in May. A recent inventory of computer printers shows that the majority of printers used by the Department are Hewlett Packard series 4's and 5's. Electronic forms will now be formatted and tested for use on these printers. Older forms will be reformatted for these printers as time permits, multi-page forms being changed first. To indicate which forms have been changed, new buttons will be added to the forms.